

Equity & Inclusion in Special Education

March 23, 2021

5:30 – 7:00 PM

**COMMUNITY
CONVERSATIONS**

Webinar opens 5:20 p.m.

Program Begins 5:30 p.m.

Welcome (Gretchen Maliska, Board President)..... 5:30 – 5:45 p.m.

Moderator Graeme Sackrison, Board Vice President

Panelists 5:45 – 6:30 p.m.

Moderated Panel

Presenter	Organization
Dr. Kari Lewinsohn, Director of Special Education	North Thurston Public Schools
Mr. Blake Geyen, Community Activist	2009 River Ridge High School Graduate
Ms. Jacqueline (Jacque) Stockwell, Parent	Student in VOICE Program Vocational Opportunities for Independent Community Employment (VOICE)
Ms. Tammie Doyle, Transition Manager	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
Ms. Michela Laverty, Special Education Teacher	North Thurston Public Schools

Breakout Sessions and Sharing (Dave Newkirk, Board Member)..... 6:30 – 6:50 p.m.

Next Steps (Gretchen Maliska, Board President)..... 6:50 – 6:55 p.m.

Closing (Chuck Namit, Board Member)..... 6:55 - 7 p.m.

“Every student will demonstrate continuous growth towards meeting/exceeding rigorous learning standards.”



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Community Panel



Dr. Kari Lewinsohn

Director of Special Education, North Thurston Public Schools

Dr. Kari Lewinsohn has over 25 years in the field of education. She has 14 years of previous administrative experience as both a Special Education Director and a principal. She has taught grades Preschool through 8th grade in both general education and special education, specializing in Math and Science. Kari holds a doctorate degree in Special Education Leadership, master's degrees in Administration and Curriculum, and a bachelor's degree with specializations in Elementary, Early

Childhood, and Special Education. She is passionate about inclusive practices and accessibility for all individuals and has presented on numerous special education topics locally, regionally, and as an adjunct professor for teacher education programs.

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Mr. Blake Geyen

Community Activist, 2009 River Ridge High School Graduate

Mr. Blake Geyen is currently the Volunteer Training Development Coordinator at People First of Washington through AmeriCorps VISTA. He attended North Thurston Public Schools from pre-school through 12th grade, graduating from River Ridge in 2009. Blake has cerebral palsy. He uses a speech device to communicate and a power wheelchair for mobility. He has a B.A. in Urban Studies from the University of Washington-Tacoma. As a Transportation Intern at Rooted in Rights/Disability Rights Washington, Blake worked with city and county officials to have sidewalks installed from the bus stop to the Pierce County Elections Center. He also successfully advocated for a bill in the state legislature to keep crosswalks and curb cuts from being blocked. He is Vice Chair of Pierce Transit's

Community Transportation Advisory Group and Eli's Park Project Leadership Team in Seattle.

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Ms. Jacqueline (Jacque) Stockwell

Parent, Student in VOICE Program

Ms. Jacqueline (Jacque) Stockwell has raised four children and has raised her grandson, Joel, since kindergarten. Joel has attended North Thurston Public Schools since he was in 5th grade. He is now 21 years old and currently enrolled in North Thurston Public Schools' Vocational Opportunities for Independent Community Employment (VOICE) program. Jacque describes Joel as a young man with learning and cognitive disabilities. As a parent and grandparent, Jacque has been actively involved in her children and grandchild's education, most recently acting as an advocate for Joel. Since becoming a nurse in 1978, Jacque has had quite a bit of work experience with patients that have mental and cognitive delays. She

holds the strong belief that each person alive wants to be acknowledged and to be able to live their best life.

360-591-2355





Ms. Tammie Doyle
Transition Manager, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

Ms. Tammie Doyle currently holds the position of statewide Transition Program Manager with Washington State's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). She has over 4 years of working with transition youth at DVR, over fifteen years of experience in education, and twelve years in business administration. Tammie attended Whitworth University for both her graduate and undergraduate studies. There she earned a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in administration and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Special Education at Washington State University.

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Ms. Michela Laverty
Special Education Teacher, North Thurston Public Schools

Ms. Michela Laverty is a product of North Thurston Public Schools, having attended Lakes, South Bay, Chinook & North Thurston High School. Earning her BA in Special Education from the University of New Mexico, Michela found a passion for the acceptance and inclusion of people with disabilities. Moving back to Olympia in 2014, she accepted a Life Skills position at her alma-mater and later earned her MA in Curriculum & Instruction from WGU. Michela has since pursued the inclusion mindset both in and outside of the classroom. Inclusion opportunities include her peer tutoring program, pushing her students into general education classrooms, and running a Unified Sports Club, which allows North Thurston students with and without disabilities to compete on a school team together. This club has evolved to include after school activities, such as movie nights, prom dinners, and attending sports games. Recently, Thurston Unified was nationally recognized as a Unified Champion School through Special Olympics. Each year, Michela and her students push to reach new levels of inclusion within North Thurston High School and provide an environment that everyone can thrive in. In her spare time, Michela enjoys playing tennis, hiking, and going on road trips.

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